

Spark Gap

Volume 27, Issue 6, June 2010 *MARC - Serving Central Indiana Communities for Twenty-Six Years*

WRT FD Strawberry Festival



From the President:

As I write this I am still unwinding from the fun and festivities known as the annual WRTFD Strawberry Festival. For those of you who were not able to participate or stop by, I will attempt to recap the day's activities. The early (8 a.m.) arrivals were Bob, KC9NJM, Jack, W8ISH,

Linda, KC9GCH, and myself. There were still lingering showers from an overnight rain, but after waiting about 30 minutes, the rain stopped and we decided to "man up" and start assembling the gear.

We started by getting the two portable shelters erected, followed by several mast supports for antennas, and the (salute) ARRL flag. The antennas consisted of a BuddiPole, 2 meter ground plane, 6 meter moxon, and slopers for 10 and 20 meters. We had two battery powered 100 watt HF/VHF all mode radios providing RF to the antennas. After the rain stopped, the sun came out and gave us the feeling of being in the tropics, with high temperatures and high humidity.

We had a good location this year where most festival attendees passed near our display, with more than usual stopping by to see what we were doing or register for the weather radio giveaway that was being offered in a drawing. One curious youngster even went "on the air" with Ed, WD9DVA as GOTA station operator W8ISH assisted. As the (hot, humid) afternoon wore on, contacts were made with stations from Maine to Nevada, and north to Minnesota. It was also VHF contest weekend and there were some openings on 6 meters to New England, Florida, and Texas. We managed to log a couple of 6

meter contacts. Making contacts was made even more challenging by generator noise and fumes from idling emergency equipment parked nearby, and also overload from the close proximity of the radios. Mid afternoon we scrambled to get the radio gear stashed out of the weather as we were treated with a pop up thunderstorm and a good (cooling) rainstorm. Being hardy ham radio types, we huddled inside our temporary shelters as the storm passed over. Fortunately, there were no nearby lightning strikes, and after the storm passed the sun and heat returned. There were the usual breaks from visiting and radio operation to make the mandatory trip inside for food and strawberry delights. We had a couple of inquiries about the club from other hams; one is relocating to our area from the Muncie area, and another was here from Florida visiting relatives in Greenwood. We had about 4 who expressed an interest in amateur radio or classes. We had a good turnout of club members who came by to assist or visit awhile, including Paul, AA9GY, Jacki KI6QOG, Dave KB9LOT, Dave KA9OOH, Brenda KC9EBL, Marc, KC9CCM, Dave N9QVO, and Chris KQ9Y. Sorry if I missed anyone, there were probably some I did not see.

Our demonstration was scheduled to last until 6 p.m., so around that time we decided to disassemble everything and get packed up. It was good timing because shortly thereafter heavy storms returned. Unfortunately, the festival finale with fireworks was cancelled due to heavy rain and a severe weather threat. The county was soon placed under a tornado watch, which required us to "reprogram" our priorities and establish a severe weather net. For those who had been at it since early morning, it was a very long day, but rewarding.

—Steve, K9DY

*The Official
Newsletter of the
Mid-State Amateur
Radio Club*



Mid-State Amateur
Radio Club
P. O. Box 836
Franklin, IN 46131
www.midstatehams.org

Bison Stampede

A statewide DX contest called the Bison Stampede took its toll on three MARC members last month. Steve-K9DY, Jack-W8ISH and Steve-N9LC staked out operating positions on a farm in Brown county. The Stampede is sponsored by the Indiana Radio Club Council in cooperation with the Hoosier DX club.

The day long exercise left them feeling like they had been run over by a herd of Bison. Sporting HF transceivers, wire antennas and enough extra parts to build a first class ham station, the three set up on the Brown county farm of Dick and Donna Cochran. It is just south of Fruitdale. Steve Carmean used existing and some non-existing nails in the side of the farm workshop to run end-fed antennas for 80-40 and 20 meter antennas. Jack used an extendable push up pole to mount a 20 meter dipole and to run a multi-band inverted-V from the out building to nearby trees. Steve Brown used his truck mounted extended mast and ran a couple of dipole wire antennas. Carmean and Parker powered their rigs from batteries while Brown snaked a long extension cord into a nearby barn.

What promised to be a record-breaking day of statewide and national contacts slowly slipped into a less than stellar performance on the logging sheet. We quickly realized what most major Field Day operations find out, you can't operate that many HF stations in close proximity without major interference problems. Despite the occasional interference all three managed to log contacts in the far northwest US, the southwest states, east coast and even a few European DXCC trophies.

Last year Steve-K9DY logged 10,000 points. This year, with the help of Jack and Steve Brown, he logged less than 100 points. In fact all three operators scored about the same. In the end, they did get some valuable field set up experience and still had a great time competing in one of Indiana's premiere HF contesting events.

Next up, the statewide RACES test July 17th and the Central Indiana HF/VHF Hilltop contest in September. We hope everyone will choose to participate in one of these fun events. If interested in helping, contact Jack or the Steve twins for more information.

-Jack w8ish

ARRL Update

AMATEURS IN ARKANSAS PROVIDE SUPPORT TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES AFTER FLOOD KILLS 20

ARRL NEWS: 06/16/2010

In the early hours of Friday, June 11, as many as 300 campers were taken unawares when somewhere between 6 and 10 inches of rain fell in the rugged Ouachita Mountains as heavy rains caused the normally quiet Caddo and Little Missouri rivers to climb out of their banks during the night. Around dawn, floodwaters barreled into the Albert Pike Recreation Area, a 54-unit campground in the Ouachita National Forest, about 75 miles west of Little Rock. Cars were wrapped around trees and children's clothing could be seen scattered across several campsites. In all, authorities said that 20 people lost their lives; 18 of the 20 victims have been publicly identified, among them eight children age 7 or younger. Eight of the 18 were from Louisiana, seven were from Texas and three were from Arkansas. The Pike County Sheriff requested the assistance of Amateur Radio operators to assist with search and rescue operations, as well as communications support, at the site.

The day before the flood, ARRL Arkansas Section Manager J.M. Rowe, N5XFW, was on his way to Plano, Texas to attend HamCom in Plano; Rowe also serves as the Arkansas Section Emergency Coordinator. "We went through some very heavy downpours southwest of Texarkana," he told the ARRL. "This storm system eventually caused the flash flood in Montgomery and Pike Counties of Arkansas. My wife Debbie, KD5UPS, is a commercial airline pilot. She sent me a text from the Tampa airport at 11 AM on Friday after seeing part of a scrolling news item about the Albert Pike Campgrounds, part of my 'stomping grounds.' I happened to be standing next to the National Weather Service booth at HamCom and they told me there had been a flash flood at the campground and people had been killed."

The National Weather Service issued a flood warning about 2 AM — just after the heaviest rains had started. As the heaviest rains began hitting, a gauge at Langley showed the Little Missouri River was less than 4 feet deep. The river climbed to 20 feet within four hours. State officials said that the terrain and lack of cell phone service in the valleys made communication difficult. Arkansas Governor Mike Beebe said damage at the campground was comparable to that caused by a strong tornado; the force of the water carried one body 8 miles downstream.

Later that afternoon, the Arkansas Department of Information Services (DIS) and the Arkansas Wireless Information Network (AWIN, the statewide P25 digital trunked radio system on 700/800 MHz) included Rowe in an Emergency Support Function 2 (Communications) Conference Call. "They said they were sending an SOW (Site on Wheels) and a COW (Cellular on Wheels) to augment existing infrastructure," he explained. "I was very concerned about the terrain and the signal propagation of those systems. Those familiar with the Ouachita Mountains will understand those concerns."

Despite temporary cell phone towers being installed, emergency personnel still needed help communicating in the remote Arkansas wilderness. According to Arkansas Section Public Information Coordinator Josh Carroll, N5JLC, the cellular towers and the cellular services that have been put in place are functioning, "but the problem is they're working for a certain portion of the affected area,

Officers

President:
Steve Carmean,
K9DY

Vice President:
Dave Daily,
KB9LOT

Secretary:
Robert Jones,
KC9NJM

Treasurer:
Jacki Frederick,
K16QOG

Repeater Trustee:
Jay Chrisman,
AA9YP

Spark Gap Editors:
Bob LaGrange,
N9SIU

**Linda
Harshbarger,
KC9GCH**

ARRL Update, *cont.*

and the area we're currently concerned with is still very spotty as far as cellular service and communications."

As Rowe traveled back to Arkansas on Saturday, he said he was able to listen to the hams on the scene coordinating search teams: "The 146.925 repeater, sponsored by Howard County Search and Rescue, was very busy with tactical traffic. The net controllers — KF5CQT, KC5JTA, N5VFJ and N5THS — were doing a great job. They had their communications van at the command post and I was invited to view the operation. It was too late to go on Saturday, so I went the next day."

When he arrived at the scene, things were in high gear. "Many volunteer teams and individuals were searching the banks, debris piles and the water for victims," he told the ARRL. "The activity was being coordinated by Chief Deputy Sheriff of Pike County Jack Naron, KE5ZME, and County Deputy Emergency Manager Floyd Dunson, KC5BYB. We made plans for Monday, and I was tasked with finding ham operators capable of strenuous duty to be matched with search teams that did not have communications. There was no way to estimate the number of operators needed, because nobody knew how many spontaneous volunteer searchers there would be."

Rowe contacted Carroll, who quickly put together a release asking for operators who would match the criteria. "A call went out on the Central Arkansas UHF Society and the AR Link System repeaters Sunday night," Rowe said. "The response was exactly what I hoped: In-shape operators willing to traverse difficult terrain in a difficult situation in a difficult environment. That's a lot to ask for."

Howard County Search and Rescue Team (HCSAR) member Freda Davis, N5VFJ, said that the Howard County Office of Emergency Services (OES) requested that HCSAR be deployed to assist with the Little River flood search operations. "We arrived Saturday and assisted until the search teams were called off at 3 PM on Monday, June 14. Throughout the operation, HCSAR team members' skills were utilized in incident coordination, communications, map reading and search and rescue." HCSAR members assisted the Pike County Sheriff Office, OES, the Forestry Service and the Arkansas Department of Emergency Management (ADEM) in coordination of searches, as well as participating in the actual search operations.

Davis said that officials used the HCSAR Communications Van (SARCOM) as the Communications Center for the Langley Fire Station deployment area. Through the use of the SARCOM Van, team members, who were also ham radio operators, communicated with searchers on the area frequencies — Amateur Radio, police, fire, AWIN and ambulance — but found that the HCSAR Amateur Radio repeater on frequency of 146.925 seemed in many cases to be the only way to communicate rescuers.

On Monday, Rowe helped match operators with teams and single volunteers from Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Virginia and Arkansas: "The ham response had been so good that we had more operators than was necessary. I am very proud of the ham community in Arkansas. I was particularly surprised by the number of fully outfitted teams that arrived from out of state. It turned out that they had someone from their community among the victims — they couldn't *not* come."

As the rivers began to recede, National Guard helicopters and hundreds of state and local officials worked frantically to search for survivors in the rugged valleys, some of them scouring the swollen rivers by canoe or

ARRL Update, *cont.*

kayak. Roads in the valleys were washed out or blocked by landslides, complicating rescue operations. "As that river goes down, you don't know how many people are under it," Beebe said.

The rough terrain likely kept some campers from reaching safety, said Tabitha Clarke, a hydrologist with the National Weather Service office in North Little Rock: "Some parts of the valley are so steep and craggy that the only way out is to hike downstream. Any hikers who had taken cars to the campsites would have been blocked at low-water bridge crossings that are inundated when the rivers rise."

Rowe said that the Arkansas State Police told them that only a single person was unaccounted for. By 10 AM on Monday, word came to have all teams take a break, because a dog team had alerted and the handler was very confident and soon thereafter, all teams returned to base. "Right after that it, officials determined that the need for our sort of team was over, and that meant the need for ham operators was at an end," he said. "The repeater was returned to normal use."

Rowe described the conditions in the search area as "awful. The heat index was above 100 degrees F every day. Debris piles and downed trees were everywhere. One pile was about 200 feet long by 30 feet high. Vehicles were strewn over more than two miles of the river. Snakes and bugs had not taken any time off. It was also a very emotional thing, as each of us put ourselves in the position of the victims' families. Three searchers had to be rescued due to heat stress."

Davis explained that on Sunday, a search team member became ill and need to be extracted from a remote location where communications were difficult on any frequency other than the HCSAR repeater: "Ken Carpenter, KC5JTA, and his team hiked into the steep heavily wooded area on the river, located the patient and coordinated the extraction through the SARCOM communications center. The rescue entailed dragging a flat-bottom forestry boat upriver to the area and getting the patient to a point where they could be turned over safely to the medical team."

Rowe thanked everyone involved: "If I start thanking folks I will miss someone, and I don't want that. So forgive me. Howard County Search and Rescue performed admirably, just by doing what they do. I want to commend them for their foresight in putting that repeater in the right location years ago. The Northwest Arkansas Task Force arrived ready to go. The guys from Bowie County in Texas had some great computer skills. The list goes on and on — all were absolutely committed and all were helping their neighbors. That's why I do ham radio, so I can help my neighbor."

Editor's Note:

This is a great report from the ARRL website on how hams respond to disasters. To include the entire article it was necessary to reduce the print size. To view the article in larger print, please go the ARRL home page.

WA9RDF

Repeater

146.835/

146.235 MHz

151.4 Hz PL

Tone

Weekly Net

Every Sunday

at 7PM ET

***Tune in to hear
the ARRL
Newsline!***

*The Mid-State
Amateur Radio Club
sponsors a weekly
traffic and social net
on our repeater. The
net begins at 7:00
p.m. local time, and
features local news,
announcements, and
NTS traffic, as well as
rebroadcasts of
Amateur Radio
Newsline. This is a
great chance to
meet other local
amateur radio
operators and test
your operating
skills.*

2010 Schedule of Events

JUNE 2010

11-12 White River Township Fire Department Strawberry Festival

Sugar Grove Elementary School, 4135 W. Smith Valley Road, Greenwood, IN

12 Tour-de-Cure, Indianapolis, IN

Contact Mike Palmer, N9FEB, at Indyhams.org to volunteer or for more information

12-13 Indianapolis Air Show, Indianapolis, IN

Contact Mike Palmer, N9FEB, at Indyhams.org to volunteer or for more information

19 MARC Meeting - 8:00 AM, Franklin, IN

Located at the Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, IN. VEC Testing after the meeting (approx. 9:30 am to 11:00 am)

26-27 ARRL Field Day Event at Home of Steve Brown, N9LC

The Field Day site is located on Muxferry Road at CR 350 south, Franklin, IN

JULY 2010

10 40th Annual Indianapolis Hamfest, Indianapolis, IN

Camp Sertoma, US 52 & German Church Road, Indianapolis, IN

17 MARC Meeting - 8:00 AM, Franklin, IN

Located at the Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, IN. VEC Testing after the meeting (approx. 9:30 am to 11:00 am)

AUGUST 2010

15 40th Annual Lafayette Hamfest, Lafayette, IN

Tippecanoe County Fairgrounds, Home Econ Building, Lafayette, IN

21 MARC Meeting - 8:00 AM, Franklin, IN

Located at the Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, IN. VEC Testing after the meeting (approx. 9:30 am to 11:00 am)

21 3rd Annual Tailgators Hamfest, Osgood, IN

Details in next month's newsletter.

SEPTEMBER 2010

18 MARC Meeting, Picnic and Elections - 11:00 AM, Franklin, IN

VEC testing will begin at 8:00 AM at the Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, IN. Picnic will begin at about 11:00 AM at a location to be announced at a later date. Following the food will be a short meeting and election of officers.

Mid-State Amateur
Radio Club
P. O. Box 836
Franklin, IN 46131
www.midstatehams.org
317.887.2558

Spark Gap

Mid-State Amateur Radio Club

The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club meets the **THIRD SATURDAY** of each month in the basement of the Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, Indiana 46131.

See our website, www.midstatehams.org, for maps on how to get to our meeting.



Mid State Amateur Radio Club
P. O. Box 836
Johnson County, IN 46131

June 2010 Newsletter – Photo Pages

Photo 1
Dayton Hamvention



Photo 2
Dayton Hamvention





Mid State Amateur Radio Club
P. O. Box 836
Johnson County, IN 46131

Photo 3
Dayton Hamvention



Photo 4
Dayton Hamvention





Mid State Amateur Radio Club
P. O. Box 836
Johnson County, IN 46131

Photo 5
Dayton Hamvention



Photo 6
Dayton Hamvention





Mid State Amateur Radio Club
P. O. Box 836
Johnson County, IN 46131

Photo 7
Dayton Hamvention



Photo 8
Dayton Hamvention





Mid State Amateur Radio Club
P. O. Box 836
Johnson County, IN 46131

Photo 9
WRT FD Strawberry
Festival



Photo 10
WRT FD Strawberry
Festival





Mid State Amateur Radio Club
P. O. Box 836
Johnson County, IN 46131

Photo 11
Bison Stampede





Mid State Amateur Radio Club
P. O. Box 836
Johnson County, IN 46131

Photo 12
Bison Stampede





Mid State Amateur Radio Club
P. O. Box 836
Johnson County, IN 46131

Photo 13
Bison Stampede

